

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS LISBON 2909

FOR: IWE PASS GAWRONSKI AND IOP

USNATO FOR USIS/HAMILTON

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: PRESS PLAY ON MAY 23-23 NATO DPC MEETING

REF: USIA 12095

1. THREE LISBON PAPERS (SECULO, DIARIO POPULAR AND DIARIO DE LISBOA), MAY 22-23 GAVE PROMINENT PLAY INSIDE PAGES TO NATO DPC MEETING AND FOCUSED ON GOP'S REPEATED PROMISES OF ITS COMMITMENT TO NATO WHICH, THE PAPERS COMMENTED, HAVE NOT ELIMINATED SPECULATION ESPECIALLY IN WASHINGTON THAT PORTUGAL WILL LEAVE NATO SOONER OR LATER.

2. WITH REFERENCE TO SPAIN AS POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTE FOR PORTUGAL IN NATO, DIARIO DE LISBOA SAID THAT GOP FONMIN MELO ANTUNES SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING U.S. AND EUROPEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES THAT THERE'S NO REASON FOR THEM TO TAKE AN ARBITRARY POSITION ON THE MATTER BECAUSE PORTUGAL HAS INSISTENTLY DECLARED IT DOESN'T INTEND TO LEAVE NATO. SAME PAPER STATED THAT GERMANY, BELGIUM AND FRANCE ARE READY TO CEDE TO U.S. PRESSURE TO ADMIT SPAIN INTO NATO AND THE COMMON MARKET. SECULO ARTICLE CONCLUDED THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE PRESSED TO FURTHER ITS TIES WITH SPAIN AS A RESULT OF PORTUGUESE POLITICAL EVENTS. DIARIO POPULAR BANNERED THAT U.S. IS OPPOSED TO NATO POLICY CHANGES WITH RESPECT TO PORTUGAL,

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BUT ALSO USED SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTIONARY ARTICLE FROM PORTUGUESE

PRESS AGENCY ANI, DECLARING THAT SPANISH POLITICIANS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE U.S. WILL PROPOSE SPAIN AS NATO MEMBER AT NEXT MEETING. DIARIO DE LISBOA CAUTIOUSLY SUGGESTED IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE U.S. WILL IN FACT MAKE THIS PROPOSAL.

3. SAMPLE HEADLINES FOLLOW: MAY 22: DIAIRO DE LISBOA: "NATO MINISTERS DISCUSS PORTUGAL", JORNAL NOVO: "NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS MEET IN BRUSSELS"; DIARIO POPULAR: "US OPPOSED TO POLICY CHANGES IN NATO WITH RESPECT TO PORTUGAL." MAY 23: SECULO: "SPECIAL NATO MEETING ON PORTUGAL'S POSITION."
JORDAN

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